

Tower Hamlets Local List Review:

Public Consultation on draft Local List Selection Criteria and Nomination Process

Executive summary

As part of the current public consultation process relating to the draft Local Plan (including the draft Conservation Strategy), the Council is also consulting on draft Local List Selection Criteria and a draft nomination process for additions to the Local List.

The draft Local List Selection Criteria have been prepared in accordance with Historic England's guidance on local heritage listing following a review of the approach adopted by other local authorities. It is proposed that public consultation on the draft Selection Criteria and nomination process will run from early November 2016 until the end of January 2017 and agreement from Cabinet will be sought in May 2017 to formally adopt the criteria.

A review of current nominations (Appendix A) will occur between March 2017 and May 2017, which will include an assessment of significance using the draft Selection Criteria. It is proposed that a Selection Panel will then review and finalise the List prior to public consultation, between July 2017 and August 2017. Agreement from Cabinet will be sought in October 2017 to formally adopt the additions to the Local List.

Background

Tower Hamlets has around 2,000 statutorily listed buildings and 58 conservation areas. There are also a large number of non-designated heritage assets, which include locally listed buildings.

The *National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012* advises local planning authorities to set out 'a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment' in their Local Plan. Emphasis is placed on 'sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets' and recognising that heritage assets are an 'irreplaceable resource' and should be conserved 'in a manner appropriate to their significance'. It defines the term 'heritage asset' as 'a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest.' Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority, including locally listed buildings (i.e. non-designated heritage assets). Further, 'the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that

affect directly or indirectly non designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.'

The publication *Local Heritage Listing: Historic England Advice Note 7* (Historic England, 2016) provides guidance on local heritage listing in accordance with relevant policy contained in the NPPF. This document and, examples of how other local authorities approach this, have been used to inform the development of the draft Selection Criteria. Local heritage listing is a means for a community and a local planning authority to identify heritage assets that are valued as distinctive elements of the local historic environment.

Heritage assets

As noted above, the NPPF defines the term 'heritage asset' as 'a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest.'

The Statutory List comprises buildings of special architectural or historic interest, and is compiled by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), as required by the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*. Listed buildings are graded to show their relative importance. There are three types of listed status for buildings in England and Wales as follows:

- Grade I: buildings of exceptional interest, of which there are 13 in Tower Hamlets;
- Grade II*: particularly important buildings of more than special interest, of which there are 40 in Tower Hamlets; and
- Grade II: buildings that are of special interest, warranting every effort to preserve them. These comprise the majority of listed buildings in Tower Hamlets, approximately 2000.

Listed buildings are statutorily protected both externally and internally, and a special type of consent, Listed Building Consent, is required for works affecting their special interest. As such, proposals for alteration, extension or demolition (including partial demolition) of a listed building require an application for Listed Building Consent

Non-designated heritage assets

In addition to the Statutory List there are currently 169 locally listed buildings and 44 locally listed war memorials within the Borough. Although these do not benefit from the statutory protection outlined previously they have been recognised as being of local townscape or historical importance. In order to

retain these buildings and preserve their essential character Council expects to see evidence that any proposed alteration enhances their character or appearance.

Non-designated heritage assets, which include locally listed buildings, are generally identified by the local planning authority during the plan-making process or through the planning application process. Unlike statutorily listed buildings there are no additional planning controls. Listed Building Consent is not required and permission is not required for purely internal works. Recognition as a non-designated heritage asset, however, is a material consideration in the planning process when planning permission is required.

Tower Hamlets local list includes buildings which do not meet the strict requirements to qualify for statutory listing but make an important positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. They are an irreplaceable resource which justifies conservation and enhancement in a manner appropriate to their significance.

Approach

Nominating a building or other asset

A range of methods can be used to identify non-designated heritage assets, including public nomination. Public nomination is the preferred approach as it is a useful way of identifying assets and has the advantage of including local communities. In such cases, however, nominations must be supported by sufficient detail and accuracy to ensure that they meet the requirements set by the selection criteria. The best way of capturing this information is by providing a nomination form, ideally downloadable from the Tower Hamlets website. A nomination form should guide those wishing to put forward a building or other potential asset for consideration. The types of information likely to accompany nominations include:

- Location details: Ordnance Survey (OS) grid references and street address.
- Local significance: identification of the significance of the asset in the local context in accordance with the selection criteria.
- Photographs: recent or historic showing changes over time.

To qualify for local listing nominated assets will need to meet the requirements of the selection criteria. A draft nomination form has also been prepared and is included as Appendix B. Further, more detailed guidance will also be provided to assist nominators when completing the nomination form. This document will also be available on the Tower Hamlets website alongside the nomination form.

Existing nominations

There are currently five nominations that will be assessed against the draft Selection Criteria in early 2017. These nominations were received over the course of the previous two years and a list is attached at Appendix A. Eleven nominations were received in total, but following review, this was reduced to six due to duplication and a number being either statutorily listed or located within an existing conservation area. Conservation Areas afford a level of protection to unlisted buildings and, for this reason, priority will be given to nominated buildings that are not located within a conservation area.

Selection panel

Following officer review of nominations a selection panel would produce a shortlist for public consultation. The selection panel would comprise members of the Council's Conservation and Design Advisory Panel (CADAP) and a representative from Historic England. It is recommended that the Selection Panel is established in early 2017 to ensure that the draft timeframe for finalising the draft Local List, set out in 'Next Steps' below, is adhered to.

Timeframes

The draft Selection Criteria have been developed following review of criteria adopted by other local authorities and with reference to Historic England's guidance on local heritage listing. Once the draft Selection Criteria have been agreed it is envisaged that it will be sent to local amenity groups, residents' associations, Historic England and CADAP for review and comment. The national amenity societies such as the Ancient Monuments Society, the Georgian Group, the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, the Twentieth Century Society and the Victorian Society will also be consulted.

Nominations to the Local List should be reviewed annually. This timeframe allows for adequate numbers of nominations to be submitted, reviewed and considered for inclusion in the Local List by the Selection Panel.

Selection Criteria for entries on Tower Hamlets Local List of Heritage Assets

To be considered for inclusion on the Local List nominations should satisfy criterion 1 and a minimum of two other criteria:

- 1. Local Character and Distinctiveness** this includes assets that:
 - a. make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness in terms of streetscape, townscape or landscape value; and/or
 - b. possess group value with or make a positive contribution to the setting of other heritage assets

2. Architectural Significance this includes assets that:

- a. are locally important by virtue of the quality of their design, decoration, material, construction or craftsmanship; and/or
- b. are attributed to a locally known architect, designer, gardener or craftsman and demonstrates quality of design, execution and innovation; and/or
- c. as a group form a locally important architectural unity or example of urban planning (such as squares, circuses, crescents and terraces).

3. Historical Significance this includes assets that:

- a. illustrate important aspects of local or regional social, economic,

cultural or maritime/military history or have close historical association with locally important people or events.

Nominations under this criterion should retain physical attributes which are of key importance to their historical significance.

4. Artistic Significance this includes assets (particularly sculpture and public art) that:

- a. are locally or regionally important for the interest of their artistic design, decoration, material, construction or craftsmanship; and/or
- b. are attributed to locally or regionally significant artists.

5. Age, Rarity and Integrity this includes assets that:

- a. are important for their age, rarity or integrity.

6. Social Significance this includes assets that:

- a. are associated with distinctive communal, commemorative, symbolic or spiritual significance; and/or
- b. are associated with locally distinctive cultural heritage, such as art, literature, music or film.

Nominations under this criterion should retain physical attributes which are of key importance to their social significance.

Next steps

The proposed programme, following public consultation on the draft Selection Criteria, is as follows:

- Consultation on the draft Selection Criteria (November 2016 to January 2017).

- Comments on draft Selection Criteria reviewed and changes made, where necessary (February 2017). It is envisaged that Cabinet would agree the draft Selection Criteria in May 2017, which would be finalised at that time.
- Invitation to potential members of Selection Panel (February 2017).
- Review of nominated assets (March 2017 to May 2017).
- Adoption of Selection Criteria (May 2017).
- Draft List finalised by Selection Panel (June 2017).
- Public consultation on draft Local List and Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (July 2017 to August 2017).
- Comments on draft Local List reviewed (September 2016).
- Adoption of Local List (October 2017).

Appendix A: Existing Local List Nominations

1. Cheviot House, 227- 233 Commercial Road.
2. The East London Central Synagogue, 30- 40 Nelson Street.
3. No.2 and No. 5 Gasholders, Bethnal Green Holders Station, Marian Place.
4. Former Warehouse Building, 66 Guinea Court (corner of Dock Street and Royal Mint Street).
5. The Milestone Public House, 44 Commercial Road.

Appendix B: Nomination Form